

Poetry.

THE BOOK OF THE NEW YEAR.

SELECTED BY ETTA ECKERLE.

The book of the new year is opened,
Its pages are spotless and new;
And so each leaflet is turning—
Dear children, beware what you do!

Let never a bad thought be cherished,
Keep the tongue from a whisper of guile,
And see that your faces are windows
Through which a sweet spirit shall smile.

And weave for your souls the fair garment
Of honor and beauty and truth,
Which will still with a glory enfold you
When faded the spell of your youth.

And now, with the new book, endeavor
To write its white pages with care;
Each day is a leaflet, remember,
To be written with watching and prayer.

And if on a page you discover
At evening, a blot or a scrawl,
Kneel quietly and ask the dear Saviour,
In mercy to cover it all.

So when the strange book shall be finished
And clasped by the Angel of light;
You may feel though the work be imperfect
You have tried to please God in the right.
Lanark, Ill.

Contributions.

CELEBRATING CHRIST'S BIRTHDAY.

Z. T. LIVENGOOD.

The first celebration of this great and glorious event, was by a multitude of the heavenly host came upon the earth praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men." If the heavenly hosts think it commendable to them to celebrate Christ's birthday, then the matter ought to be settled for all lovers of the Son of man. His advent into the world deserves to be honored and kept sacred more now than eighteen hundred years ago, because of what Jesus and his teachings have done for the world, no character in all the world has done so much for the advancement and civilization of humanity as this Christ whom we hold as our Saviour.

Compare the world in the time of Christ with the present. Closely examine some of the elements of true civilization. Look at the home in that age and then in our own. No one who is acquainted with the history of man can for a moment doubt the vast advancement of the home as a divine factor in the upward growth of mankind and sacredness of relations. Oh! how the home is lifted up into the very hallowed presence of God. Christ in his teachings lifted the marriage relations out of the slough of sensualism and lust and placed them upon the solid foundation of intelligence, wisdom and love.

Surely the world could consistently and righteously celebrate this day because of what Jesus has done and is still doing for the protection and advancement of the true ideal home. Underlying and upholding the church of God and his everlasting government is the true home. Then guard her sacred precincts, care for, cultivate and nourish all its members that she may become more and more the home Jesus taught she should be.

The good that Jesus did for the home, he also did for the state, for true government, for inventions, discoveries, for help to the sick and unfortunate, in the shape of free schools, colleges, hospitals, county farms, old people's homes, humane societies, orphan's homes, homes for the helpless and all the benevolent societies of the world.

And the birth of Jesus is to be honored and held sacred not alone for what the world does already enjoy of his goodness, but because there is still so much in store for his people. So many of his promises we do not yet claim through obedience. Let us praise him for what he has done for all, and for what he stands ready and willing to do for all. How can we most acceptably live this time of commemorating the advent of the true Saviour of all who call upon him. The angels came down from heaven to sing praises at his coming, at the ushering in of his law and kingdom,

We should always be faithful and obedient, and be about our Master's work. This however, does not prohibit us from rendering him special service and praise upon this especial day of Christ. Those who can should do some special work of almsgiving to the real needy and deserving. Thus we will honor his name and help his cause, and lay up a crown of righteousness. Some of us can not give alms, but we can have a true desire to do so, and we can do something that sometimes is of more value than money, or food and clothing, and this is to take the man who is unable or unwilling to earn money, to sow, and reap, to labor, and set him upon his feet and give him a disposition and ability to earn his living and to be a man who is praising and honoring God and himself. Let this day be a day of special effort for Christ's cause. Children should be taught to reverence this event, and live so that they could give some special, though small offering unto the Lord. Scatter smiles and sunshine on this day. Scatter love and truth on this day. Carry the light on this day into the homes and hearts of the sad and lonely, the dark and dismal, the vile and sinful, so that peace and good will among

men may flourish like the green bay tree. Celebrate this holy, sacred day with song, prayer and holy meditations, and thus advance his work among men, and honor his worthy name in all the earth.

Lanark, Ill.

DAILY LOADETH US WITH BENEFITS.

J. M. BOWMAN.

God's tenderness and bounty to us, rise more and more into our thoughts as we give our hearts time for meditation upon Him. O it is wonderful! If he had contented himself with doing large things as creating worlds and studying heaven, with burning diamonds or overthrowing armies and nations, thus declaring his greatness and awful majesty, we should not be so often surprised and led to such close tender love for him. The very thought of God seems naturally to bring us to think of strange and stupendous achievements.

But the wonder is that he turns from these great tasks and out of his strange tender love "*daily loadeth us with benefits.*" Here are these words that convey so much to the heart touched by the Holy Spirit, loadeth, daily, benefits. Paul talks about "the unsearchable riches of Christ." I am sure that God's benefits to us are unmeasurable. With what sweet restfulness we can give all things into the care of our God when we know that he always seeks our benefit? Then we need not fear any lack for he loadeth us. No, God's hand is not shortened. No danger of being stinted in the benefits bestowed. He often pours out blessings in such profusion and so lavishly that we can't contain them. Often times I fear they come so rich that we can't even think of their coming from God. He loadeth us!

If he had only at certain times shown his favors to us and then turned back into the darkness it would not be so strange but it is daily. Little things have his attention. He does not become tired. He continually seeks our benefit. O what a stupendous blessing! To-day we can cast our cares and worries into the keeping of God, and to-morrow he will not leave us alone.

Then there are some big days in his bestowing benefits. When he gave us Jesus his son, we received at his hands a benefit that reaches from eternity to eternity.

When my way is hedged about me,
Hedged with thorns of care;
When the cross I loved so dearly,
Seems too hard to bear;

When my heart is bowed with sorrow,
And no light I see—
Lord, Thy tender mercy pleading,
Let me lean on Thee.